

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING LAWRENCE "LARRY"
MARIO CARAVARIO OF CLEAR
LAKE, CALIFORNIA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 24, 2005

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize California Highway Patrol Officer, Lawrence "Larry" Mario Caravario of Clear Lake, CA as he retires from 31½ years of dedicated service.

"Larry" Caravario was born and raised in San Francisco. He attended Riordan High School followed by 2 years at the City College of San Francisco where he studied accounting.

In January of 1974, Larry joined the California Highway Patrol (CHP). Eventually he was stationed in the Lake County. For years he protected county residents watching out after them as he patrolled state highways and county roads. Additionally, Officer Caravario was responsible for training his fellow officers in matters of weapons and safety. He also served as the CHP's representative to Lake County schools as a pupil safety officer.

Mr. Speaker, when not patrolling the streets or training other officers, Officer Caravario dedicated his time to the children of Lake County. Since 1967 he has coached youth and high school soccer, basketball and baseball. In 1968, Officer Caravario began working as a basketball and baseball game official.

In retirement, Officer Caravario plans to spend more time with his wife Diane, his son David and daughter Joell.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that we take time to thank Officer Caravario for his hard work and devotion to his community throughout the years. On behalf of my fellow colleagues, I wish him the best in all his future endeavors.

STATEMENT OF INTRODUCTION:
CHILDREN AND MEDIA RE-
SEARCH ADVANCEMENT ACT

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 24, 2005

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce, along with Representatives HART, BACA and FORD, the Children and Media Research Advancement Act, or CAMRA Act.

This bill has also been introduced in the Senate by Senators LIEBERMAN, BROWBACK, CLINTON, SANTORUM, and DURBIN.

Our children live in the information age, and our country has one of the most powerful and sophisticated information technology systems in the world. While this system entertains them, it is not always harmless entertainment. Media have the potential to facilitate the healthy growth of our children. They also have

the potential to harm. We have a stake in finding out exactly what that role is. We have a responsibility to take action. Access to the knowledge that we need for informed decision-making requires us to make an investment: An investment in research, an investment in and for our children, an investment in our collective future. The benefits to our youth and our Nation's families are immeasurable.

In order to ensure that we are doing our very best for our children, the behavioral and health recommendations and public policy decisions we make should be based on objective behavioral, social, and scientific research. Yet no Federal research agency has responsibility for overseeing and setting a coherent media research agenda that can guide these policy decisions. Instead, Federal agencies fund media research in a piecemeal fashion, resulting in a patch work quilt of findings. We can do better than that.

The bill we are introducing today would remedy this problem. The CAMRA Act will provide an overarching view of media effects by establishing a program devoted to Children and Media within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This program of research, to be vetted by the National Academy of Sciences, will fund and energize a coherent program of research that illuminates the role of media in children's cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and behavioral development. The research will cover all forms of electronic media, including television, movies, DVDs, interactive video games, cell phones, and the Internet, and will encourage research involving children of all ages—even babies and toddlers. The bill also calls for a report to Congress about the effectiveness of this research program in filling this void in our knowledge base. In order to accomplish these goals, we are authorizing \$90 million dollars to be phased in gradually across the next 5 years. The cost to our budget is minimal and can well result in significant savings in other budget areas.

This legislation has strong support among researchers and children's advocates. Ted Lempert, President of Children Now, a national nonprofit organization which for years has focused on the need for policymakers to keep pace with the rising influence of media on children, writes: "CAMRA's establishment of a program on children and the media within the Center for Disease Control and Prevention will provide invaluable insight into the role and impact of electronic media on the children's development. Kids are spending more time with media than on any other activity except for sleeping, yet there are sizeable gaps in what we know about the role media play in children's cognitive, physical and behavioral development."

Jim Steyer, founder and CEO of Common Sense Media, a leading non-partisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting a healthy media environment for children, supports CAMRA, saying "We enthusiastically endorse the funding of coherent research which will better illuminate the role of media in chil-

dren's cognitive, social, emotional, physical and behavioral development. In an increasingly digital world where convergence of technologies provides entertainment, information and interactive possibilities to consumers, there are discernable knowledge gaps about the role of media on children's healthy development."

Michael Rich, Director of the Center on Media and Child Health at Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health, also wrote the following in support this bill: "As a caring society we assess and respond to the quality of the air children breathe, the water they drink, and the food they consume. You and your co-sponsors are to be commended and supported for your foresight and leadership in directing the National Institutes of Health to investigate what we are feeding our children's minds and how that is likely to affect their health and development, now and in the future."

From the cradle to the grave, our children now live and develop in a world of media—a world that is increasingly digital, and a world where access is at their fingertips. This emerging digital world is well known to our children, but its effects on their development are not well understood. Young people today are spending an average of 6½ hours with media each day. For those who are under age 6, 2 hours of exposure to screen media each day is common, even for those who are under age 2. That is about as much time as children under age 6 spend playing outdoors, and it is much more time than they spend reading or being read to by their parents. How does this investment of time affect children's physical development, their cognitive development, or their moral values? Unfortunately, we still have very limited information about how media, particularly the newer interactive media, affect children's development. Why? We have not charged any Federal agency with ensuring an ongoing funding base to establish a coherent research agenda about the impact of media on children's lives. This lack of a coordinated government-sponsored effort to understand the effects of media on children's development is truly an oversight on our part, as the potential payoffs for this kind of knowledge are enormous.

Consider our current national health crisis of childhood obesity. The number of U.S. children and teenagers who are overweight has more than tripled from the 1960's through 2002. We think that media exposure is partly the cause of this epidemic. Is it? Is time spent viewing screens and its accompanying sedentary lifestyle contributing to childhood and adolescent obesity? Or is the constant bombardment of advertisements for sugar-coated cereals, snack foods, and candy that pervade children's television advertisements the culprit? How do the newer online forms of "stealth marketing", such as advergames where food products are embedded in computer games, affect children's and adolescents' eating patterns? Cell phones are one of the latest emerging high-tech gadgets to own,

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